

Plant forgoes IEPA permit

By Jeff Minton
Herald staff writer

Formal complaints have been filed with the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency by Carpentersville residents living near the Cargill paint resin plant, charging the company with violating air pollution control regulations.

Since March 29, 1985 the Cargill plant has been operating without an IEPA "plant operating permit."

"This agency has reviewed your Application for Operating Permit for the above referenced project. The permit application is DENIED because of Section 9 of the Illinois Environmental Protection Act," the IEPA letter dated

"If I had known (about the odor) when we were looking at the house we probably wouldn't have bought it. It seems to come and go on certain days. The days when it's really bad, you have to stay in the house with all the windows down and even that doesn't help."

Karen Schuman

March 29, 1985 read.

The apparent violation under section 9 of the act read that the permit was denied because the plant was "causing, threatening and/ or allowing odorous emissions as attested to by complaints filed with the Agency."

Cargill reapplied on Aug. 12, 1985 for an operation permit, but

was again turned down.

An IEPA letter dated Nov. 8, 1985, and sent by certified mail to the company, stated the following specific reason for the denial:

"The incinerator may emit particulate matter and carbon monoxide in excess of the allowed

Cargill

under 35 Ill...A compliance demonstration must be based on an actual stack test. This application included a plan for conducting an emission stack test as requested in the Agency's June 17, 1985 denial of the previous application.

"At a meeting on September 20, 1985, the Agency informed Cargill that the tests protocol for particulate matter and carbon monoxide looked sufficient. ... However, until a stack test is done, and results demonstrating compliance received, the Agency cannot grant a permit.

"The Agency has on file complaint from citizens near Cargill Facility about odors from Cargill. Odors are considered a violation of Section 9(a) of the Environmental Protection Act..."

A stack test measures the amount or concentration of an air contaminant in the gases discharged from a source.

Carpentersville resident Billita Jacobsen who has completed a documentary film on residents living near Cargill, said the IEPA has been aware of the problem for sometime.

"The attorney general took Cargill to court in 1978 on similar violations, and won, yet nothing seems to be getting done," said Jacobsen.

Jacobsen said the director of the regional IEPA air pollution control office in Maywood would not forward Carpentersville residents' complaints on to Springfield.

"I call and call and call and nothing is done," Jacobsen said.

A call placed to Sy Levine, IEPA director of the Maywood office, about Cargill and its permit violations was inconclusive.

Levine choose not to talk about the permits saying "any information or questions had to be sub-

mitted in writing under the Freedom of Information Act.

A call placed to the IEPA office in Springfield, however, confirmed that Cargill was operating without a permit.

"I can't believe he acted like he knew nothing about the situation at Cargill," Jacobsen said. "But that's how its been all along for these people. They get the run-around and nothing is done."

Larry Laskowski, project engineer for Cargill, said that the stack testing is currently being done on one of the two plant operations and that the other "has not been started yet." He said the plant has been operating under a prior permit, and that testing is being done under revised guidelines set down under the federal Resource Recovery Conservation Act.

"They (EPA) revised the way testing was to be done when the law was changed a couple of years ago, and those are the guidelines we're now using," Laskowski explained. He declined to say exactly when the second phase of stack testing would get under way.

"If I had known it when we were looking at the house, we probably wouldn't have bought it," Karen Schuman, a resident living near Cargill said. "It seems to come and go on certain days. The days when it's really bad, you have to stay in the house with all the windows down and even that doesn't help.

"At first I thought it was a gas leak in my house...I was getting lightheaded and nauseated. Then it got really bad, like paint thinner," she said.

Dale Nelson, another resident who complained to the IEPA, said she just recently received a complaint form.

"They were supposed to call back (IEPA) and never did. And

finally, after months, they sent me a complaint form without telling me who or where I'm supposed to send it to."

Another resident, Marcie Klymko, said she smelled the odor so often that she kept a log on how long it lasted.

"I used to keep a log but it does no good. I've called the IEPA several times, but nothing was really done about it. If you call them now, they just say 'We'll send you some complaint forms'," Klymko said. "People give up because the EPA really doesn't do anything."

"I'm just worried that down the line there's going to be health problems with my children or myself or my husband because we've lived here 10 years with the odor."

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Carpenters

Bý Gerard Dziuba
Herald staff writer

Months ago, John Morrison predicted it would be a long winter.

He knew things would be tight financially and hard around the holidays. Tempers would be short and frustration would begin -- all over his job.

Morrison, a Carpentersville resident, is one of the 1,100

"I wanted to get arrested in the corner just so much fighting."

union members strike Chicago Tribune, who is living on half of his salary and walking the picket line in the middle of the winter hours.